

Discontinuation Considerations



*Kentucky Reading First Technical Assistance
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Kentucky

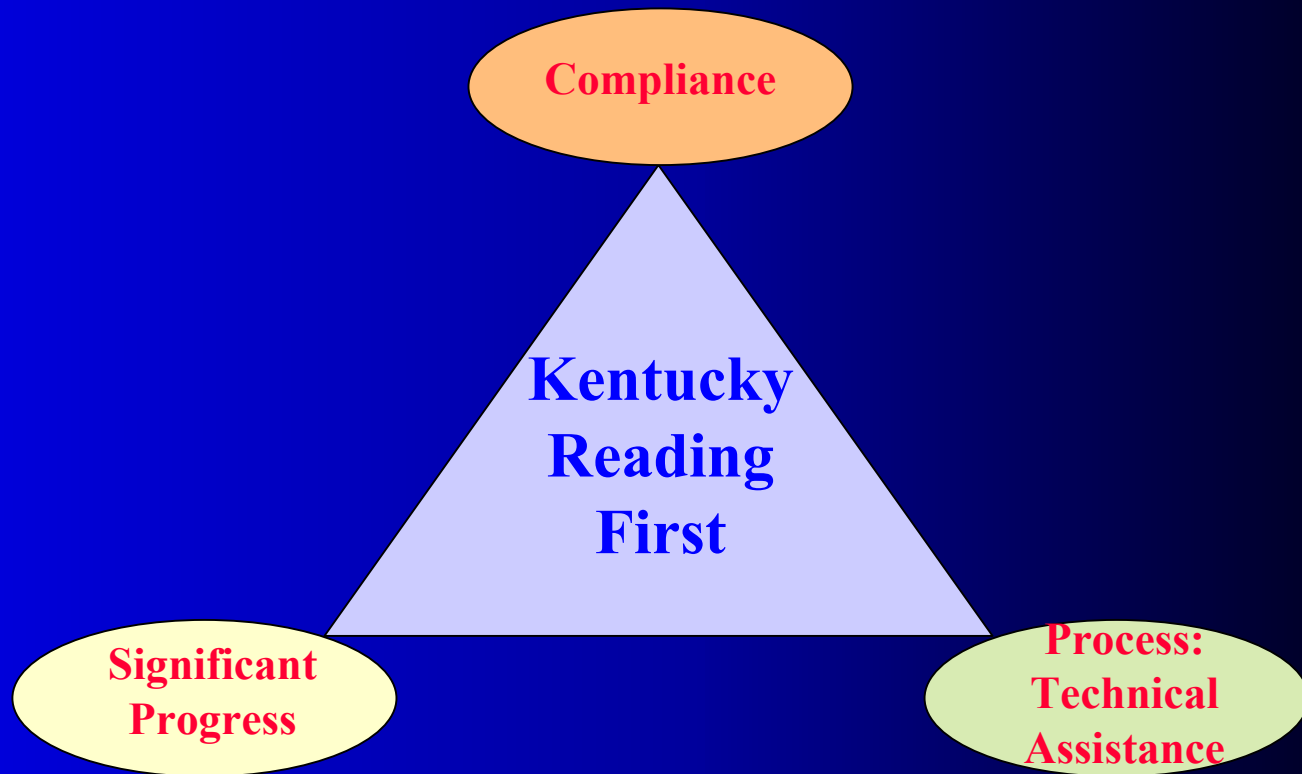
Reading First's Rigor

- States, districts and schools are required to show that they are meeting their implementation obligations and making significant progress in order to receive continued funding.
- This specifically allows for discontinuation of subgrantees that do not adhere to the non negotiables or make significant progress.

Discontinuing Subgrants to Districts and Schools

- Discontinuation should not be done arbitrarily or lightly.
- Clear processes and procedures for continuation and discontinuation decision making will help to minimize ambiguity and controversy.
- First Check, June 2006

Primary Reasons for Discontinuation



- Non-compliance/program implementation
- Failure to make significant progress/student achievement
- Process: on-going technical assistance

I. Compliance: Program Implementation

- Districts and schools must implement their Reading First plans in full accordance with the statute and each district's approved subgrant plan.
- Monitoring of implementation and outcomes may reveal areas of concern.

Compliance v. Capacity

- It is important to distinguish between capacity issues and deliberate non-compliance.
- At the classroom, school and district level, there will be monitoring issues in spite of good-faith efforts to implement Reading First appropriately.
- Over time, capacity issues may become compliance problems.

The Last Resort

- Compliance issues that may result in discontinuation
 - Failure to implement
 - Failure to implement appropriately
 - Failure to administer assessments and meet reporting requirements
 - Budget/financial issues

Failure to Implement

- The district or school has not put their Reading First program into action in a timely manner. For example:
 - Kentucky non-negotiables
 - No core reading program
 - No professional development
 - No reading coach

Failure to Implement Appropriately

- The quality of the LEA or school's Reading First program is unacceptably low.
- Important can't do/won't do distinction.
 - Won't do – unlikely to be resolved by technical assistance
 - Can't do – extensive technical assistance should be provided.
- Corrective action plans provide opportunities for improvement.

Failure to Report Data

- The LEA or school has not administered required assessments or has not reported required data.
- As this is a data-driven grant program, failure to report data – including disaggregated data – is non negotiable.
- The district/school has not submitted reports (i.e., annual performance report, school coach log) on time.

II. Significant Progress: Student Achievement

- The definition of significant progress is left to the States, a clear and consistent definition should be used.
- Multiple data sources will be used to determine progress
- Student achievement alone will not discontinue a district or school.

What is Significant?

- Progress occurs along two continua:
 - Increasing numbers of students reading at grade level
 - Decreasing number of lowest performing students (e.g., lowest quartile; in need of intensive intervention)

Where to Focus

- Statute focuses on increasing number of students reading at grade level (i.e., Has the number of students at the 50th percentile on GRADE increased at each level?).
- Focusing only on decrease in lowest performing students may give an unfair advantage to schools that have actually moved few students to proficiency (I.e., Is there a decrease in the number of students scoring in the intensive category on DIBELS from beginning to end of year?).
- A definition that considers both criteria is optimal.

How Kentucky Set Standards

- Reviewed other states
- Reviewed Kentucky data
- Established benchmarks

III. Process:

Technical Assistance

- The goal of monitoring is to correct issues and concerns.
- States need a clear plan for how technical assistance will be provided when issues are identified.
- State Coach Support
- KDE/Regional Technical Assistance Center site visits

Additional Technical Assistance

- Monthly Conference Calls
- Documentation and timelines are key.
- Discontinuation should be the last resort.

Budget Issues

- The district or school has spent Reading First funds inappropriately or has not met State or local fiscal responsibilities.
- Some budget issues may be correctable with technical assistance; others may be grounds for immediate discontinuation.

Judgment Calls

KDE will consider all evidence in three categories for making decisions:

- A). Compliance-implementation
- B). Student achievement
- C). Progress-technical assistance

Consequences

- Districts may not ‘swap out’ schools when a school has been discontinued for lack of compliance or lack of significant progress.
- Remember, Reading First is a grant to the district. Non-compliance at the school level is the district’s problem.
- If the minimum subgrant requirement is an issue, the State should consider an amendment to the original subgrant plan.

Projected Consequences

- Self Monitoring with corrective action plans
- Intensive technical assistance by KDE and the state coach
- Coaching session for targeted districts, June 2006
- Follow up through following year
- Decisions for continuation/discontinuation, June 2007

Final Thought

- We must always remember that although well funded, Reading First resources are limited. As we consider the complexities related to continuation/discontinuation decisions, we must be mindful that not every school and district that wants to participate will get to continue the opportunity.



<http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Instructional+Resources/Literacy/Kentucky+Reading+First/default.htm>

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